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PAUL'S VISITS TO JERUSALEM.

By PROFESSOR WILLIS J. BEECHER, D.D.,
Auburn, N. Y.

The visits made by Paul to Jerusalem, after his conversion, are especially important, because our knowledge of the dates and the order of the events of early Christian history depends upon them. Five such visits are mentioned in the narrative portions of the Acts. The first, Acts 9 : 26-30, is the one when Saul was recognized as a disciple ; let us call it the *recognition* visit. In the second, Acts 11 : 30 ; 12 : 25, Barnabas and Saul, in the famine, carried relief from Antioch ; call this the *relief* visit. In the third, they met the apostles and elders and "all the multitude" of the Jerusalem church, Acts 15 : 4, 6, 12, 22, on the question of the status of Gentile Christians ; call this the visit of the *council*. Of the fourth, Acts 18 : 18, 22, we have no details, except that Paul "went up and saluted the church" ; call this the *salutation* visit. The fifth, mentioned with many details in Acts 19 : 21 and the following chapters, and in the Epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians, is the visit when Paul carried large alms to the poor saints in Jerusalem, and when he was assaulted, kept two years a prisoner, and then sent to Rome ; call this the visit of the *imprisonment*.

In Paul's addresses, as distinguished from the narrative, he speaks twice of having been in Jerusalem, Acts 22 : 17-21 ; 26 : 20. The latter of these two passages is apparently general, but the former refers to a definite occasion, when he was in a trance in the temple, and was forbidden to remain in Jerusalem, and required to go "far hence to the Gentiles" ; call this the visit of the *trance*. Further, in Gal. 1 : 18-19, Paul speaks of a visit to Jerusalem, three years after his conversion, when he abode with Cephas fifteen days, but saw no other apostle, though he saw James, the Lord's brother ; call this the *Cephas* visit. Finally, in Gal. 2 : 1-10, he speaks of a visit fourteen years after either his

conversion or the *Cephas* visit, in which he and Barnabas received "the right hands of fellowship" from James and Cephas and John; we will call this the *fellowship* visit.

If any one cares to study the matter, he should begin by fixing in memory the important statements made in the passages just referred to. Any one who does this will, I think, recognize the eight names that I have given to the visits as correctly describing, in each case, the most important characteristic of the visit. And, in the process of examining the passages, he will come to see that the central question in any investigation that may be made is the question whether the *fellowship* visit, Gal. 2 : 1-10, is to be identified with any of the visits mentioned in the Acts, and with which of those visits, if with any.

Conybeare and Howson, and more recent writers as well, give accounts of the various answers that have been proposed. So far as I know, a strong majority of scholars identify the visit of Gal., chap. 2, with the *council* visit, Acts, chap. 15. Others identify it with the *relief* visit, Acts 11 : 30, or with the *salutation* visit, Acts 18 : 18, 22, or make it different from all the five visits mentioned in the narrative in Acts. The solution I have to propose is unlike all these. I hold that the *fellowship* visit, Gal. 2 : 1-10, is identical with the *recognition* visit, Acts 9 : 26-30. Very likely some one may already have proposed this view, but I do not happen to have met it. It seems to me that it carries positive evidence along with it, and I shall, therefore, discuss the other solutions only to the extent to which they contribute to the bringing out of this evidence.

1. The usual solutions of the problem take for granted the identity of the *Cephas* visit, Gal. 2 : 18-19, the *trance* visit, Acts 22 : 17-21, and the *recognition* visit, Acts 9 : 26-30. They do not argue this. They assume it, as being a matter of course. And just at this uninvestigated point, their position is weak.

There is, indeed, no reason against identifying the *Cephas* visit with the *trance* visit. Saul may have gone to the temple, during the fifteen days of his stay with Cephas, and may there, in a trance, have been forbidden to remain in Jerusalem, and required to go to the Gentiles. If this occurred, it admirably

fits and supplements the rest of the history. Three years before this, at his conversion, he had been designated to work among the Gentiles, Acts 9 : 15 ; 26 : 17-18. Now he has an intense longing to labor at Jerusalem, on the very ground where he had formerly been known as a persecutor, Acts 22 : 19-20. What Peter and James think of the matter we are not told. The temple vision decides it, and he departs, only returning to Jerusalem, many years after, to report upon his work among the Gentiles, and seek fellowship.

But, when it comes to identifying the *Cephas* visit with the *recognition* visit of Acts 9 : 26-30, the obstacles are insuperable. True, the *Cephas* visit is the one first mentioned in Galatians, and the *recognition* visit is the one first mentioned in Acts, and this creates some presumption that the two are identical, and accounts for the fact that many have so regarded them. But this presumption vanishes when we notice the differences between the two. In Acts 9 : 26-30 Barnabas is prominent, while it would be difficult to find a place for him in Gal. 1 : 18-19. The object of the visit of Acts, chap. 9, is "to join himself to the disciples," and that of the visit of Gal. 1 is "to become acquainted with Cephas," and these two objects, while not necessarily inconsistent, are unlike. In Acts, chap. 9, his errand is with the apostles, while in the affair in Galatians he sees no apostle but Peter, unless we call James, the Lord's brother, an apostle. Even if we count James an apostle, the statement in Galatians cannot apply to the event described in the Acts :

"He was with them going in and going out at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord ; and he spake and disputed against the Grecian Jews ; but they went about to kill him," Acts 9 : 28, 29.

Further, after this public association with the apostles, in and out of Jerusalem, he would not have been "unknown by face" to the Judæan churches as he declares he was after the *Cephas* visit, Gal. 1 : 22. Still further, the account of the *recognition* visit makes the impression that he then escaped from Jerusalem to Tarsus, and there remained till Barnabas persuaded him to go to Antioch, and again engage in work, Acts 9 : 30 ; 11 : 25-26 ;

while the account of the *Cephas* visit makes the impression that he went at once into active work, in Syria first, and then in Cilicia. In view of these differences, it is, in the highest degree, improbable that the visit described in Acts, chap. 9, is the same with that described in Gal., chap. 1. But much of the argument for the commonly received view rests on this identification, and loses its strength when the identification is broken up.

2. The identification of the *fellowship* visit, Gal. 2: 1-10, with the *council* visit, Acts, chap. 15, is beset with difficulties. This is confessed even by those who advocate the identification, but the difficulties are greater than they are willing to acknowledge.

There are certainly some resemblances between the two visits. In each, Barnabas is associated with Paul. In each, James and Peter are prominent. In each, matters connected with Gentile disciples are under discussion. In each, the question of being circumcised and keeping the law of Moses is raised. In connection with each, mistaken brethren are mentioned as interfering with liberty. But in the affair of Gal., chap. 2, John appears associated with James and Peter; he does not so appear in the Acts. Titus figures conspicuously in the account in the epistle, and not at all in that in the Acts. In the affair of the Acts, Paul and Barnabas go up as the result of appointment by the church; in that of Gal. chap. 2, Paul goes up by revelation. The affair in the Acts is the result of dissensions in the church, and is as public as any affair can well be; the affair in Galatians is one in which Paul acted "privately." The matter in the Acts was publicly considered before a large council, while that in Galatians, so far as appears, was decided by a few men of reputation as leaders. The account in Galatians seems to be an account of the first recognition by the Jerusalem apostles of the work of Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles; but the account in the Acts is of an affair that occurred some years after Barnabas had been officially sent from Jerusalem to labor among the Greeks at Antioch, Acts 11: 22; and not less than a year or two after Saul and Barnabas had been sent to Jerusalem with alms from these Gentile Christians, Acts 11: 30. These considerations exclude the possibility that the visit of Acts, chap. 15, is the

same with that of Gal. chap. 2. To these should be added the entirely separate consideration that the account in Galatians seems to imply that Saul had not been to Jerusalem between the visit of Gal. 1:18, and that of 2:1. It follows that this latter visit must have preceded the *relief* visit, Acts 11:30; 12:25, while the affair of Acts, chap. 15, certainly follows the *relief* visit.

3. There are strong reasons (though reasons that have been much neglected) for regarding the *fellowship* visit, Gal. 2:1-10, as identical with the *recognition* visit, Acts 9:26-30.

The very names that we have used thus far, based as they are upon the statements made in the two passages, suggest this identification. In a case like this, fellowship is not materially different from recognition. "The apostles" of the account in the Acts correspond to the men "of repute," the "pillars," the "James and Cephas and John" of the account in Galatians. In each account, Barnabas is associated with Saul. According to Acts 9:26, Saul "assayed to join himself to the disciples," while Paul's account of the matter is Gal. 2:2, 9: "I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, . . . lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain . . . And when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, . . . they . . . gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship."

These two statements as to the objects of the visit agree. If the events of Acts 9:26-30 had already taken place, there would have been no occasion for the visit of Gal. chap. 2. Paul had been preaching fourteen years in Damascus and other parts of Syria, and in his native Tarsus and other parts of Cilicia. He had founded churches there, Acts 15:41. There was danger that the gospel he was preaching would come to be considered a different religion from that preached by the apostles at Jerusalem. He wished to join himself to them, securing from them a recognition that they were all teachers of the same gospel. Further, the two accounts agree in representing that suspicions and difficulties stood in the way, but that the recognition sought was finally secured. Afterward, if the two accounts be of the same event, the reasons for being private ceased to

exist, and Saul was with the apostles at Jerusalem, publicly teaching there with them, recognized by them as a fellow laborer, until persecution arose, and he was obliged to flee to Tarsus, Acts 9: 28-30.

At first thought, one might object to this that the passage Acts 9:26-30 is to be regarded as an account of something that occurred soon after Saul's conversion, and not of something that occurred fourteen years later. But if one will look carefully at the passage and its context, he will probably be convinced that there may have been an interval of time between the events of verses 26-30 and those narrated in the preceding verses. Paul explicitly declares in Galatians that three years elapsed after his conversion before he went to Jerusalem at all. As we have seen, the common view is that three years intervened between Saul's conversion and the events of Acts 9:26-30, and the continuity is no more broken if the interval is fourteen years, than if it were three years.

4. With this identification many difficulties are removed, and it becomes easy to complete the solution of the problem, and to fix the important dates. Saul, as we have seen, was persecuted, and went to Tarsus. Meanwhile, Barnabas, having been recognized along with Saul as one who should "go unto the Gentiles," was formally appointed by the Jerusalem church to look after the work among the Greeks at Antioch, Acts 11:20-24. From Antioch he went to Tarsus, and returned bringing Saul with him, verses 25-26. A year later, Barnabas and Saul, remembering their promise, Gal. 2:10, concerning the poor, went to Jerusalem carrying relief. This was Saul's third visit to Jerusalem after his conversion, and, as we have just seen, occurred somewhat more than a year after his second visit, the second visit being that described in Gal. chap. 2, and Acts chap. 9.

If we had no information save that in the book of Acts, we should be inclined to date this almsbringing visit in the year in which Herod Agrippa I. died; for the account of the killing of James, the imprisonment of Peter, and the death of the king is inserted between the two verses that give the account of this

visit. The year of Herod's death was A.D. 44. But we learn from Josephus that the famine, by reason of which the relief was sent, occurred after the death of Herod, under his successors Cuspius Fadus and Tiberius Alexander. That is, it lasted more years than one, and was within the period from 45 A.D. to 50 A.D. The stipulation that they should remember the poor, Gal. 2 : 10, seems to indicate that, at the time of the *fellowship* visit, the suffering from the famine had already begun. Hence we might date the *fellowship* visit and the *relief* visit in any two successive years between A.D. 45 and A.D. 50. As a matter of fact, we must date them as early in this period as possible, in order to allow sufficient time for Paul's first and second missionary journeys, which followed soon after. Thus we have A.D. 45 for the visit of *fellowship* and *recognition*, and A.D. 46 as the year of the visit of *relief*.

This gives us the following cast of events. Notice how, in this cast, some events that are commonly regarded as very unmanageable slip readily into place. This fact is a strong confirmation of the correctness of the views here advanced.

Assuming that the crucifixion occurred at Easter of A.D. 30, the death of Stephen probably occurred the same year, some weeks or some months after Pentecost.

Then the remainder of A.D. 30, with the whole of A.D. 31 and some part of A.D. 32 constituted the time when Saul was persecuting the church.

A.D. 32 was the year of Saul's conversion, the fourteen years of Gal. 2 : 1, being the year 32, the year 45, and the twelve intervening years. Persecution did not cease at once, but was still carried on by his associates, and by others. Saul's mission to the Gentiles was declared immediately upon his conversion, Acts 9 : 15, 26 : 17.

The year of the *Cephas* visit was A.D. 34, the three years of Gal. 1 : 18 being A.D. 32, 33, 34. By this time, perhaps, the persecution had ceased, and "peace" (Acts 9 : 31) had come to the churches. In consequence of the scattering by the persecution, the Gospel had been preached to Jews throughout Judæa, Samaria, Galilee, the Damascus region, and Cyprus, and very

likely already in Cyrene, Phœnicia, the Antioch region, and other regions, Acts, chap. 8, 9:1-14, 31; 11:19; 4:36, etc. Saul himself had been laboring among the Jews in Damascus, 9:20, 22, and had been to Arabia and returned, Gal. 1:17. Had he already begun preaching to the Gentiles? And had Peter already met Cornelius, and learned that Gentiles might receive the Gospel? As to these questions we have no information, but we may conjecturally answer them both in the negative. We are told nothing as to the subjects of conference between Cephas and Saul at this visit, but we naturally infer that they considered the question of coöperation in the work of the Gospel, and that the conference was without apparent result.

Saul's escape from Damascus in a basket, under Aretas, Acts 9:25; 2 Cor. 11:32, is by some dated either early in A.D. 37 or between A.D. 38 and A.D. 41. These dates are not very well established, but as Saul went from the *Cephas* visit to Syria, Gal. 1:21, and as Damascus was in Syria, there is no difficulty in the idea that his escape by the basket was after the visit.

A.D. 44 was the year of Saul's splendid revelations by vision from God, when he was caught up into the third heaven, 2 Cor., chap. 12; for these revelations, he says, occurred fourteen years before the writing of 2 Corinthians, and this epistle was written A.D. 57, and both terminal years are to be counted in the fourteen. This was also the year of the death of James and the imprisonment of Peter. Saul had now been preaching in Syria and Cilicia for ten years since his visit to Cephas, Gal. 1:21-24. He was personally unknown, but favorably known by reputation, among the Judæan churches. That Gentiles were included in his ministrations appears from Gal., chap. 2. That he founded churches appears from Acts 15:41. Meanwhile the Jerusalem apostles and their followers had doubtless greatly enlarged their work, in different regions, among the Jews, and, beginning with Peter's visit to Cornelius, had done some work among Gentiles. Possibly the church at Rome was already founded. Probably the preaching to Greeks at Antioch by compatriots of Barnabas had now begun, Acts 11:20. The religion of Jesus was growing rapidly in two sections, the one headed by the

Jerusalem apostles, and containing a small Gentile element, and the other headed by Saul, and containing a large Gentile element. There was reason for exultation over its rapid growth; but there was also reason for anxiety lest the two sections should become two different and antagonistic religions.

As to the things revealed to Saul, at this eventful period in his experience, we have no information. It is difficult to believe, however, that none of them referred to the existing condition of Christ's kingdom; and we naturally infer that they were somehow or other connected with his going up, the following year, "by revelation," to Jerusalem, for his *fellowship* visit there. Matters had ripened since his previous visit, and he had now more reason to hope for success. Somehow, moreover, he had come into relations with Barnabas, and Barnabas would be an influential mediator.

In A.D. 45 occurred the *fellowship* visit, Gal. 11: 1-10. Identifying this with the *recognition* visit, Acts 9: 26-30, the man who had been so recently exalted to the third heaven, in the revelations made him, was doubtless deeply mortified at being compelled to flee for his life. Yet the fellowship that had been established was fruitful. One result of it was that Barnabas was appointed by the Jerusalem church to look after the work among the Greeks in Antioch. From this it resulted that Saul was called to Antioch, and that, in a few months, Christianity made wonderful advances there.

The *relief* visit was made in A.D. 46, and the first missionary journey may have begun the latter part of the same year or any time thereafter. Positively this tour must have taken a good deal more time than the few months sometimes assigned to it. It was followed by the dissensions at Antioch, and the *council* visit at Jerusalem, and then by the second missionary tour. In this tour, as the events are commonly understood, Paul revisited the churches of Syria, Cilicia, Lycaonia, and Phrygia, evangelized Galatia, crossed into Europe, labored at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens, and reached Corinth in the summer or early autumn of A.D. 52. This work, again, demands a good deal more time than the fraction of a year assigned to it by some

writers. A fairly general agreement among some recent scholars dates the council at Jerusalem in A.D. 50 ; the time will be better distributed if we assign the council to 49 A.D., and suppose that the first tour began in A.D. 46.

Those who hold that the *council* visit, Acts 15, is the same with the *fellowship* visit, Gal. 2 : 1-10, find it difficult to understand the conduct of Cephas, Gal. 2 : 11-14. Cephas was now an older and wiser and more responsible man than in the days when he denied the Lord. He took an influential part in the decision of the council at Jerusalem. It is not credible that, a few months after that council, he went to Antioch, and conducted himself in the manner described in Gal. 2 : 11-14. It is credible that he did this at some time between Saul's *fellowship* visit, A.D. 45, and the meeting of the council, A.D. 49. Very likely Paul and Barnabas found him at Antioch on their return from their first tour. He had come with very cordial feelings toward the Gentile Christians—he, the man to whom God had shown by miracle that nothing is unclean. He went to an extreme in neglecting the restrictions of the Jewish law, and afterward went to the opposite extreme. For this Paul rebuked him, but Barnabas took sides with him and his friends, and, later, the two were sent to Jerusalem on the matter. Meanwhile Peter found his true bearings, and was influential in bringing to a happy settlement the question which had arisen partly through his own impulsive conduct.